

WHEREFORE, WE CLAIM

1. A conversion quick pitch system for converting a pitching machine of the type having a spring actuated arm for propelling a ball toward a hitter into a video pitching machine, said quick pitch system including:

5 a projection screen adapted to be positioned between said pitching machine and a batter, a video projector for projecting the video image of an actual pitcher on said screen; and a clutch motor unit for:

commencing the display of the video image;

holding said spring actuated arm in a queued position while the video image of the
10 pitcher is being displayed on the screen; and

releasing said arm at a predetermined time so as to deliver a ball toward a hitter in synchronization with the video image.

2. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 1, further including control means for
15 controlling said clutch motor unit.

3. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 2, wherein said control means are connected to said video projector and said clutch motor unit and includes means for storing and playing the video image for projection by the video projector.

20 4. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 1, wherein said screen includes an

aperture to permit a ball delivered by said pitching machine to pass there-through.

5. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 1, wherein said video projector is an LCD projector.

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6. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 1, wherein said projector screen is a fabric screen shock mounted to a rigid frame.

7. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 3, wherein said control unit includes a microprocessor and a hard drive on which said video images are stored.

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8. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 7, wherein said control unit is able to cause the projector to display the video image on the screen and actuate the clutch motor unit to release the arm and cause the ball to be propelled toward a hitter in synchronization with the video image.

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9. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 7, wherein said quick pitch system and method further includes a first and second relay.

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10. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 9, wherein said first relay serves to turn on the clutch motor unit to retain the arm in a queued position and the second relay serves to

override the first relay and permit the arm to propel the ball toward the hitter.

11. The conversion quick pitch system of claim 1, wherein said clutch motor unit includes a first cam switch to initiate display of said video image and a second cam switch to
5 initially hold the arm in a queued position and ultimately release the arm from said queued position so as permit the arm to propel the ball toward the hitter.

12. A conversion quick pitch system for converting a pitching machine of the type having a spring actuated arm for propelling a ball toward a hitter into a video pitching machine,
10 said quick pitch system and method including:

a projection screen adapted to be positioned between said pitching machine and a batter,

a video projector for projecting the video image of an actual pitcher on said screen;

a clutch motor unit having a clutch brake and at least two cam switches, said first cam switch adapted to initiate the projection of the video image on said screen and the second cam
15 switch adapted to initially hold the arm in a queued position after initiation of the projection of the video image and then release the clutch brake at a predetermined time so as to synchronize the release of the ball with the video image; and

a relay unit including a first relay for causing said arm to be held in a queued position and a second relay for releasing said arm from the queued position and deliver a ball toward the
20 batter.

13. A method for converting a pitching machine of the type having a spring actuated arm for propelling a ball toward a hitter into a video pitching machine, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a conversion quick pitch system and method including:

5 a projection screen adapted to be positioned between said pitching machine and a batter,

a video projector for projecting the video image of an actual pitcher on said screen;

a clutch motor unit including a clutch brake and at least two cam switches, said
10 first cam switch being adapted to initiate the projection of the video image on said screen and a second cam switch adapted to hold the arm in a queued position after initiation of the projection of the video image and then release the clutch brake at a predetermined time so as to synchronize the release of the ball with the video image; and

a relay unit including a first relay for causing said arm to be held in a queued
15 position and a second relay for releasing said arm from the queued position and deliver a ball toward the batter; and

installing said conversion quick pitch system and method onto a spring-actuated pitching machine.